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The Director of Central Intelligence

Executive Registry
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12 January 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Vice President

SUBJECT : Priorities for 1979 Agenda

REFERENCE : Your Memorandum, Same Subject, dated 11 January

1. Your 11 January memorandum recommended that intelligence charter legislation be established as a top-ranking Administration priority on the 1979 Agenda and that January-February be established as a target date for the introduction of such legislation. You asked for comments by today.

2. I support the President's commitment to intelligence charter legislation. I believe that this is a most important step in the Administration's effort to gain firm control of the Intelligence Community, while regaining the Community's effectiveness. The prospect for being able to gain Congressional approval of new charters during this year does not appear promising. Moreover, for a variety of reasons with which you are familiar, the Administration still lacks a position on a good many of the charter legislation issues, including those of paramount interest in the Congress. Given that circumstance, and the fact that there is no realistic prospect of arriving at well-considered positions by the January-February target date, I believe this is the wrong time to declare that charter legislation is a first priority. Such a declaration could end up either embarrassing the President or leading to unwise decisions made under unnecessary pressure, or both.

3. At this point I think it would be enough for the President to repeat his support for the general idea of charter legislation and his commitment to work closely with the Congress in this regard. At the same time, I urge that we move ahead expeditiously to develop an Administration position that can be taken to the Congress soon.

/s/ Stansfield Turner
STANSFIELD TURNER

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